The Campaign for
MIDDLEBURY
COLLEGE

June 8, 1987

Mr. Steven E. Wishengrad
100 Hooker Street
Allston MA 02134

Dear Steve,

Please accept my apologies for the delay following up our conversation about divestment during the phonathon. Between Graduation and Reunion, life has been a bit hectic here on campus.

In your letter to The Campus early last year, you encouraged the College to take a "moral stance" on the issue and withdraw all investments with companies doing business in South Africa as a means of putting pressure on Pretoria to make racial equality a reality.

Middlebury, like many other educational institutions, has been wrestling with the issue of divestment for quite some time. It has always been the College's opinion that change in South Africa is the goal. The means have been evaluated and re-evaluated in keeping with an intellectual tradition that considers both principles and pragmatism.

Middlebury is supporting three black students at predominantly white South African Universities, in an effort to incorporate quality non-racial education into the changing circumstances in that country. The three scholars are:

--Stephen Sihlangu, a Bachelor of Arts candidate in Education at University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg;

--Mpafane Simani, A Bachelor of Science (Honours) candidate in Mathematical Statistics at The University of Cape Town;

--L. N. Paile, A Bachelor of Arts Candidate in Journalism at Rhodes University.

Both Sihlangu and Simani plan careers in teaching. Paile intends to become a journalist.

After passionate debate (partly provoked by strong student opinions that included the student occupation of Old Chapel), Middlebury's Board of Trustees voted "to initiate a process of divestment that has as its goal total divestment of (South African) holdings within 24 months."

Last fall, in an effort to continue public discussion of democratic reform, the College sponsored the national broadcast "South Africa: A National Collegiate Symposium". I hope you had a chance to hear it. It was, I think, a significant step for many of us in the serious contemplation of the political and ethical considerations inherent in the South Africa question.

Middlebury relies on alumni (as well as students and parents) for many things including both direction and support. South Africa has provoked passionate debate on campus, a debate which the College has both fostered and considered. I have enclosed a cassette transcript of the symposium, a related article from the Middlebury Magazine, the divestment announcement and a clip from The Chronicle of Higher Education about other college's divestment considerations.

Middlebury is taking a leadership role in the educational community. Although there will doubtless be future issues that you will feel might have warranted a different response, I expect you are pleased with the decision to divest and I hope that you find reason to celebrate the College's many efforts to help bring about peaceful reform in South Africa.

Sincerely,

Hugh

Hugh Montgomery '83

Assistant to the Director
of Planned Giving

cc: Grier Taylor-Weeks
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Steve, I'm impressed with your tenacity for the sake of your principles. I hope Middlebury and other liberal arts institutions will continue to hold ethics in highest regard despite the fact that such principles are often inconvenient and expensive.

H